

Los Angeles Regional Crime Laboratory Facility Authority



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APRIL 3, 2008

SUMMARY OF NOTES

The thirty-sixth meeting of the Los Angeles Regional Crime Laboratory Facility Authority was held April 3, 2008 at the Hertzberg-Davis Forensic Center, 1800 Paseo Rancho Castilla, Los Angeles, California 90032.

CALL TO ORDER

Director Baca called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. The following Directors were present:

Leroy D. Baca, Los Angeles County Sheriff
George A. Pardon, Interim Vice President, California State University at Los Angeles

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 13, 2007 MINUTES

Director Baca, in lieu of a quorum, received and filed the December 13, 2007 meeting minutes.

CHAIR'S REPORT

There was none.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 14, 2008 MINUTES**

The Facilities Management Committee Meeting Minutes of February 14, 2008 were received and filed.

- **OPERATING BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009**

Jack Schweizer, Project Coordinator, reported that the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 is divided in two major parts. The first part is the three-way shared cost between the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD), the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and the California State University Los Angeles (CSULA). The second part is the shared cost between the LASD and the LAPD. The three agencies shared cost has been determined by a proportional allocation of useable square footage of the building. This proportional allocation was then divided into the total operating cost of the building to determine each agency's cost. Currently both the LASD and the LAPD have 43% of the useable square footage of the building and the CSULA has the remaining 14% of useable square footage.

Mr. Schweizer provided detailed information on forecasted budgetary expenditures and noted some personnel changes (copy on file). He also stated that the Authority will need to meet as soon as possible as the budget is due in Sacramento no later than June 30, 2008.

RENEGOTIATE CSULA "PROPORTIONATE SHARE"

George A. Pardon, Vice President, CSULA, reported that the amount of money the CSULA receives for facility maintenance is far less than the amount of money needed for this project. The University receives \$147,000 from the State of California based on the amount of square feet being occupied in the building, which is less than half for this year's allocated cost to the University. The University has limited resources to allocate to the program and as a result of having to invest all the money into the maintenance of the building, the University has very few dollars to spend on hiring faculty or purchasing equipment resulting in a much diminished program and ultimately a less effective use of the space. It is functionally and operationally becoming very difficult and quickly becoming an inferior component of this magnificent operation that the Authority envisioned and developed.

Director Baca noted that there is another issue regarding the request and proposal. He further emphasized the importance of the request. Director Baca suggested acquiring advice from County Counsel and the City Attorney's Office in collaboration with the University to prepare the legal documents for the Joint Power Authority (JPA) which also include the obligation of maintaining the building and assuring the building functionality.

Director Baca advised that the JPA should consider input from County Counsel, the City Attorney's Office and University Attorneys as to the feasibility of requesting the chancellor's office make up the financing gap issue relative to the standard maintenance budget principle used by the university system.

CRIME LAB CONSTRUCTION PHASE II

Barry Fisher, Crime Lab Director, reported that the Sheriff requested to look into additional facilities to meet JPA future needs. At the last JPA meeting, Mr. Fujioka moved to have the Sheriff and the County's Chief Executive Office (CEO) work together to figure out a way to have the process started. A consultant was hire to begin putting together the lease assessment facility study in coordination with the University. The University can say either yes or no to building another structure on the campus, and whether they have chosen to participate is still an issue the JPA needs to examine.

Mr. Fisher met with George Anderson, Director of Law Enforcement under Attorney General Brown, to discuss the possibility of the Crime Lab Construction Phase II and the DNA Lab that would be a redundant system to their program. Mr. Anderson stated that Attorney General Brown is interested and would like to work in cooperation with the JPA. He also mentioned the need of dealing with the current State budget crisis.

Director Baca stated that the State of California passed a new law that will be in effect January 2009 requiring DNA samples be collected from all individuals who are arrested. At this point, there is no funding and the JPA needs to do a feasibility study.

MAIN PARKING LOT MODIFICATIONS

Mr. Schweizer reported on using the remaining contingency fund (not to exceed \$30,000) to make the proposed parking lot modifications. The first process is to develop an engineer drawing and submit it to the University for its review and approval. Once this process takes place and all parties involved are satisfied with the design it is then put out to bid. Director Pardon stated that this project was reviewed by the university's planning director and the university is in support of the project.

Director Baca asked if there was a problem with traffic backing up. Mr. Schweizer replied that at certain times of the day it is difficult to get in and out of the parking lot. The University has large flows of traffic and the first lane gets blocked while cars are waiting to get into the parking lot and that cars coming out of the parking lot need to pull over to allow enough space for passage. It was one of the first issues brought to my attention when the building opened.

CALIFORNIA FORENSIC SCIENCE INSTITUTE

Rose Ochi, Executive Director, California Forensic Science Institute (CFSI) reported on training programs developed under the grant received from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the status to seek an earmark. Ms. Ochi reported that under the first earmark of the NIJ grant the CFSI put together a training development working group consisting of Dr. Alan Muchlinski, Chair of the CSULA Biological Sciences Department, Dr. Amelia Russo-Neustadt, CSU Fullerton and Robert Taylor, Assistant Director LASD. The first course developed was Drug Toxicology. The course was well received and has been alpha tested by students of the master's criminalist program. The course is available on DVD and is in a web base format. The second course developed is on forensic DNA. The development working group was composed of Steve Renteria, LASD, Winters Hardy, Ph.D., LAPD, and Assistant Professor Donald Johnson CSULA. The group came together and developed a grant that has incorporated standard operating procedures from both the LASD and LAPD and has been reviewed by California Criminalistics Institute (CCI).

Ms. Ochi introduced Harley Sagara, Training Coordinator, to discuss the plans in the near future for the development of the DNA Academy. Mr. Sagara stated that it will be the standardized training program for the State of California because the Department of Justice Crime Lab (DOJ) is in partnership with the LAPD and LASD. Mr. Sagara further reported that CCI has provided 310 DNA Analyzers and other equipment and supplies to be used by examiners and training students. CCI is investing in the facility and teaching courses that are attracting people from across Southern California.

Ms. Ochi reported that there have been efforts to develop a non-traditional web based program for firearms training rather than the mentor approach currently being used. Mr. Beta Tam, LAPD Firearm Examiner, conducted a one day live course on "Cartridge Comparison" that drew students statewide and one from as far away as Hawaii.

Ms. Ochi further stated that she has been working on videotaped series of firearms courses conducted by Beta Tam, and it is currently under CCI's review for digitization. In addition, CFSI is planning a new firearms hazard course organized by Ruben Flores, LASD.

Mr. Sagara reported that CFSI is working with CSU to have an extended education program in Forensic Science. NIJ has been working with CSULA extended education department on four proposals on basic crime scenes photography, fingerprinting and investigation, and courtroom testimony.

Ms. Ochi reported to the Authority that the DNA Academy as planned was intended for the training of staff personnel. However, there is a dire need for training pre-hires. The forensic DNA courses planned for the academy will consist of lecture and laboratory work for individuals who have graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in the appropriate areas of science. Ms. Ochi concluded her report by stating more work needs to be done with CSULA extended education department on the development of the curriculum.

CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Schweizer offered a report on behalf of Paul Davidson, General Services Department, on the status of the release of escrow funds. There remains one outstanding issue to resolve with Harley Ellis Devereaux regarding a billable services discrepancy for the amount of \$40,000. Mr. Davidson has a meeting scheduled for April 9, 2008 with Mr. Devereaux and Steve Moody and expects to resolve the issue during the meeting. In addition, Mr. Davidson should have a letter stating to release escrow funds by the end of May. The current balance in the accounts is \$3,170,977 million.

Director Baca inquired about the meeting held regarding the Facilities Management Committee (FMC) and how things are moving along. Mr. Schweizer stated that his main focus has been to get the building up and running smoothly and that process is nearly completed and the next phase will be working on building efficiency. The FMC is working well.

CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Director Baca shared his vision of a national/international agency cooperation agreement between law enforcement agencies to work together to solve problems. Director Baca envisions a means where by an agency that has exhausted all of its resources to solve a problem may contact the Crime Lab for assistance. This could be accomplished via video conferencing. Agencies would have an opportunity to collaborate with our experts and share resources. Specifically, Director Baca wanted to know if there exists the communication technology to support such a vision and is it feasible.

Barry Fisher, Director Crime Lab, stated there is the technology presently available to support Director Baca's vision. He further stated that the center has quickly become a magnet for visitors from China, United Arab Emirates, Central and South America. There are huge opportunities for both the facility and the University in the area of training. There is a particular need for management training.

Director Baca stated that in the war on terror national/international agreements on sharing information will be a significant element used in preventing terrorist attacks. Terrorists are criminals first and law enforcement agencies have a role to plan in winning the war on terror.

Mr. Schweizer reported that there is a project budget surplus of \$400,000 with \$180,000 going to the LASD and the LAPD and \$40,000 going to the University. The surplus will be applied to the 2008–2009 budget.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.